



MISSOURI DEER HUNTING

A black silhouette graphic of a deer and a dog running. The deer is on the left, followed by a dog, and a smaller dog is running behind it. They are running towards the right, with a large, dark, bushy shape on the far right.

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INTRODUCTION

Each year, several thousand hunters go deer hunting for the first time. This booklet is intended to help first-time hunters enjoy the sport and improve their chances of getting a deer. Successful old-timers have already discovered and used most of these techniques. They may even disagree with some of them and probably have worked out other techniques of their own.

Missouri's deer management program has come a long way since the season reopened in 1944 after an extended closure. That year, 7,557 hunters took 583 deer during a two-day, bucks-only season in 20 southern Missouri counties. In recent years, more than 400,000 gun and bow hunters typically harvest more than 200,000 deer annually during statewide seasons. Missourians can take pride in the widespread restoration of this major wildlife species.

Successful deer management requires flexibility in response to changing conditions. The white-tailed deer is strongly affected by hunter pressure; populations can be underharvested or overharvested. The penalties for either are great. With underharvest, extensive crop damage, overuse of range, and eventual starvation or disease may result. Overharvest means several years of slow recovery, especially in Ozark habitat where forage quality is lower. Successful management is maintaining the delicate harvest balance.

Many tools are necessary to accomplish this balancing act. For example, Missouri is divided into 59 management units to allow regional management based on habitat type, deer populations and hunter pressure. (See map on page 22.)

Quota management, a way of rationing deer harvest, is another useful tool. In Missouri, hunter numbers are not limited, but antlerless deer are rationed in some units by issuing Any-Deer Permits. An allowable take of does is calculated and the proper number of Any-Deer Permits is issued to accomplish the desired harvest. In many units, Bonus Deer Permits ("antlerless-only") are issued so that an adequate harvest of does is maintained. The quota system is a good management tool because it pro-



vides the best available control of doe harvest.

Back in the 1950s and early '60s, Missouri had short any-deer seasons. As hunting pressure increased, this type of management became outdated because harvest of does could not be controlled. Today, the firearms deer hunting season is composed of different portions that provide the

varied hunting opportunity requested by Missourians. The current season structure accommodates different hunting methods and styles, and also specific user groups. Consequently, it satisfies the great demand for deer hunting without harming the resource, and also provides multiple weekends of hunting opportunity for those who cannot hunt on weekdays.

PREPARATIONS

Choosing a place to hunt

All Missouri counties have been opened to the hunting of bucks since 1959, and Missouri probably will continue to have statewide deer seasons in the future. The quota of Any-Deer and Bonus Deer permits may vary annually, but the hunter will still be able to hunt for a buck anywhere in the state.

Missouri offers a wide range of hunting conditions. The Ozark region in southern Missouri has large areas of solid timber. As much as 85 percent of some counties are wooded. The central counties have cultivated land mixed with woods in about a 50:50 ratio. The prairie region in northern and western Missouri is mainly agricultural land with woody cover confined to woodlots or along streams. Most deer hunting in Missouri is done on privately owned land. Many landowners still permit free hunting, but there is a growing tendency to charge for hunting privileges, either by the day or the season. Occasionally, farmers lease their entire holdings to a group of hunters for the season. Remember, always obtain permission before entering private land.

The U.S. Forest Service owns about 1.5 million acres in the Missouri Ozarks, and this land is open to public hunting. Maps are available from the U.S. Forest Service, 401 Fairgrounds Rd., Rolla, MO 65401. The Conservation Department manages more than 600,000 acres that is also open to hunting. Maps are available from the Department of Conservation, P.O. Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0180, and also at www.conserva.tion.state.mo.us.

Scouting

No matter where you choose to hunt, you should become as familiar with the area as you are with your own backyard. Your chance for success in a familiar area, even though it may have fewer deer, is greater than in an area that is strange to you. Thorough scouting



prior to the hunting season will greatly increase your chances of success.

Look for deer tracks, droppings, signs of browsing on plants, buck scrapes along the edge of forest clearings and antler rubs on small trees. Scouting should not be done too far in advance of the season, however, because the deer may change their location and movements as the acorns begin to drop and the breeding season begins.

A good map is essential to scouting any area. Topographic maps show the location of ridges, hollows, streams, and other landmarks which will help you become familiar with a new area. Not only will they help you plan your hunt, but they also may keep you from getting lost. Experienced hunters who are wise to the habits of deer can pick out likely spots for a stand from a topographic map. Topographic maps may be purchased from the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Division of Geology and Land Survey, ATTN: Maps and Publications, P.O. Box 250, Rolla, MO 65402, (573) 368-2125.

Once you have decided on a place to hunt, stay with it. There must be deer in the area or you wouldn't have picked it in the first place. The longer you hunt in the same place and the more you learn about the area and the habits of deer, the better your chance of success.

As an example of how the wily whitetail can avoid the hunter, six experienced Michigan deer hunters

were permitted to hunt inside a mile-square fenced enclosure which contained 39 deer. It took 14 hours of hunting to kill a deer during an any-deer season and 51 hours of hunting to kill one buck during a bucks-only season. During one season, with good tracking snow, it wasn't until the fourth day that the hunters even saw one of the antlered bucks known to be present. It took 15 1/2 man-days of hunting to locate and kill this buck inside a fenced area with snow on the ground.

What gun to use

Conservation Department regulations permit firearms hunters a wide choice of weapons. They may legally use shotguns not smaller than 20-gauge or larger than 10-gauge (slugs only); muzzleloading or cap-and-ball firearms not smaller than .40-caliber; rifles or handguns firing only centerfire ammunition; or longbows, compound bows and crossbows.

Prohibited weapons include full metal case projectiles, ammunition propelling more than one projectile at a single discharge and self-loading rifles having a capacity of more than 11 cartridges in magazine and chamber combined.

A muzzleloader portion of the firearms season provides muzzleloading firearms enthusiasts with additional deer hunting. Persons holding a firearms permit can hunt in December but are restricted to using a muzzleloading firearm; no other

firearms, longbow or crossbow may be carried during this portion of the season.

What rifle should the beginner use? The choice of a deer gun is usually influenced by the hunter's desires, finances, advice from experienced hunters, and what is available. However, there are several other factors that should be considered: How good of a shot are you? Can you take the recoil of a large caliber rifle? Are you going to use the gun just for deer hunting? Are you going to hunt deer in Missouri only?

If finances are a problem, the hunter should consider using a shotgun. The one-ounce slug from a 12-gauge shotgun can be very effective at short range. About 5 percent of Missouri's deer harvest is by shotgun. The effective range of a shotgun slug is only about 100 yards, but this range is adequate for Missouri conditions. In our rough terrain and brushy cover, most deer are killed at less than 100 yards.

Most shotguns, however, do not have adequate sights for accurate aiming at even 50 yards. A shotgun is designed to be aimed so that the spread of the pattern will cover the target. The chest area of a deer presents about a 12-inch target; therefore, the single slug must be aimed with considerably better accuracy than the shot pattern. Rifle-type sights for shotguns are available from

several "after-market" companies. In addition, many manufacturers offer special rifled slug barrels for their shotguns and most allow for mounting a scope.

When you mention deer hunting, most people immediately think of a deer rifle. What is the best deer rifle for hunting in Missouri? There seem to be as many answers to this question as there are rifles available. Hunters in a 1991 survey used every legal type of weapon. Deer were killed with rifles of various centerfire calibers and with all types of actions—lever, bolt, pump, auto-loader and muzzleloader.

The 1991 survey indicated that 68 percent of deer hunters used a .30 caliber rifle (.30-.30, .308, .30-06, etc.). Other popular deer calibers included the .270 (11 percent) and the .243 (9 percent).

The .30-.30 has probably killed more deer in the United States than any other cartridge. Since World War I, however, the .30-06 has become the most popular cartridge nationwide; ammunition is available nearly everywhere in a wide range of bullet weights and loadings. Since white-tailed deer are relatively thin-skinned, light-framed animals, there is little need for the heavier rifles—those in the .358 or .375 class or larger. Recoil from these guns is often so heavy that inexperienced shooters cannot use them with much success.

The best deer rifle is the one that any given hunter can shoot best. There are lots of wild stories and myths about the power of big-game rifles, and most of these big guns are vastly over-rated in their supposed killing power. A well-placed bullet of adequate weight and velocity will put a deer down to stay, and a poorly placed bullet, no matter how large, is the first step toward a wounded, lost animal. No high-powered cartridge is a substitute for good, accurate shooting.

In recent years, the majority of serious deer hunters have chosen rifles in the .243, 6mm, .270, .30-.30, .308 and .30-06 class. These cartridges develop relatively light recoil, which makes them fairly easy to shoot accurately.

Whatever rifle you choose, try it out thoroughly before deer season. Sight it in carefully, and fire enough rounds on the shooting range to become accustomed to the recoil, the muzzle blast and the handling characteristics. Open sights are standard equipment on most rifles when they come from the factory and, therefore, are the type used by many hunters. A peep or telescopic sight may be more satisfactory for the beginner. Most authorities agree that the peep sight is faster and more accurate than the open sight and it forces the beginner to get his or her cheek down on the stock of the gun when aiming. However, in the dim light of early morning or in heavy woods, it may be hard



The best deer rifle is the one you can shoot best.



Try out your gun thoroughly before deer season.

to see through the peep if the aperture is less than 1/8-inch in diameter.

Because of its light-gathering qualities, a good scope is a distinct advantage in dim light. For Missouri conditions, a 2- to 4-power scope is an excellent addition to a deer-hunting rifle, especially for the beginner or older hunter whose eyes may have trouble adjusting to open or peep sights. Scopes of over 4-power magnification not only are unnecessary in Missouri but may be a handicap because over-magnification may show only a patch of hair and adversely affect the hunter's ability to place the bullet well. A variable power scope should be considered if the hunter plans to also shoot varmints or hunt big game out West.

Equipment

The choice of other equipment can be as important as the choice of rifle. Proper equipment will make your hunt more enjoyable and directly assist you in bagging your deer. Advance preparation will certainly make the chore of field dressing and handling a deer much easier.

The first consideration should be proper clothing. Clothing should be comfortable but not too warm. It is best to dress in layers so that you can

be warm in the pre-dawn chill, but be able to remove sweaters or wool shirts in the heat of the midday sun.

Regulations require that during the firearms deer season all hunters must wear a hat and shirt, vest or coat of "hunter orange" (also known as daylight fluorescent orange or blaze orange) so that the color is plainly visible from all sides while being worn. "Camouflage orange" does not satisfy this requirement. Do not carry a white handkerchief; a careless hunter might mistake it for the tail of a deer when you pull it out of your pocket.

Good leather boots are necessary for walking over rough country. For sitting still in cold weather, a pair of insulated rubber boots or felt pacs is recommended.

Comfortable clothing, a loaded rifle and a sharp knife are the only really essential items for a successful deer hunt. That's all the equipment many Missouri hunters carry because they do not plan to go very far from their automobiles. There are some additional items that are good to have along and will make the hunt more enjoyable. A raincoat or poncho is a comfort in rainy weather and can be used as a windbreak on a stand. A flashlight is a great convenience for finding your stand in pre-dawn darkness. Carry the topographic map of the area and a compass. A 15-foot length of stout rope is handy for drag-

ging a deer, hoisting your rifle (unloaded) into a tree stand or for unforeseen emergencies. A strong plastic bag is a sanitary, bloodproof container for the heart and liver of your deer. A piece of cheesecloth or muslin to cover the body cavity of a field-dressed deer and protect it from insects is good in warm weather. Some hunters also carry binoculars.

These items can be stuffed into your pockets, but a small backpack or belt-pack can also be used. The bag also is a good place to carry your lunch and extra clothing, and it leaves both hands free for handling the rifle.

A deer can be field dressed with a sharp pocket knife, but the job is easier with a sharp, stout knife having a straight, relatively thin, 4- to 6-inch blade with a dropped point. A light hand ax is handy for splitting the pelvic girdle, but a stout knife will work for all but the oldest, toughest deer.

THE HUNT

There are few licensed, professional guides available to deer hunters in Missouri. However, a new hunter can secure the advice and assistance of a landowner or experienced deer hunter who will know which areas the deer are using at the time, the location of the best crossings and the probable movement pattern of deer through the area.

The most frequently used methods of hunting deer in Missouri are hunting from a stand, still hunting and organized drives. Most hunters hunt from a stand, at least during early morning and late afternoon. A good stand is located where deer will pass in going about their daily routine of feeding, watering and resting. And during November, deer show increased activity associated with the breeding season.

Deer are creatures of habit and follow nearly the same routes in going from feeding areas to water to resting areas. In areas with many deer, their daily movements make clearly defined paths. The point where two paths cross is an excellent place for a stand because it doubles the hunter's chances. Always locate your stand so that the wind will blow your scent





away from the path or crossing. Sitting with your back against a tree or rock will help to break up your silhouette, but remaining motionless is more important than concealment.

Another good location for a stand is the edge of a field or forest clearing where deer come to feed in the early evening or early morning. A wooden platform built in the limbs of a tree overlooking a clearing makes an excellent stand; the use of tree stands is increasing each year. Portable tree stands are also popular. A hunter in a tree stand can see better over a larger area, and is less likely to be detected by the deer. For safety's sake, never climb into a tree stand with a loaded gun and always wear a safety belt or harness.

The secret of hunting from any stand is to sit still, stay alert and stay on the stand. This type of hunting requires a lot of patience.

Patience is hard to maintain on a cold November morning. Few hunters actually stay on the stand for more than three or four hours. Observations from airplanes indicate that by 9 a.m. most of the hunters are beginning to move through the woods and are resorting to still-hunting. Another name for still-hunting is stalking. As the name implies, the hunter moves as slowly and quietly as possible through the woods, hoping to see a deer before it sees him or her. This technique works best with snow on

the ground or when the leaves are wet from rain. It is very difficult to move quietly through several inches of dry oak leaves. This method usually results in the hunter seeing a lot of white flags disappearing over the ridge top, but not much venison. Some wise guy on a stand will probably kill the deer that is sneaking along ahead of you.

An organized deer drive is a technique sometimes used in large tracts of timber, usually in the Ozarks. This method requires coordination and cooperation to insure safety. One or more hunters, designated as "shooters," are placed on stands where deer are likely to cross when pushed by the "drivers." Drivers are other hunters in the party that move through a part of the hunting area in an attempt to push deer toward the shooters. It is critical that all shooters know the locations of other shooters and also the direction from which the drivers will come. This allows the shooters to determine safe lines-of-fire. Shooters must not leave their stands until the drive is over, and the drivers must stay in line and not stray from their predetermined approach. Knowing the location of others participating in the drive is the key to a successful and, more importantly, safe hunt.

No matter which system of hunting you use, be quiet but alert and be sure of your target before shooting.

Tree stand safety

A little-known fact is that each year 30 to 40 hunters are injured in tree stand-related accidents. Injuries range from minor scrapes and bruises to broken bones to permanent paralysis to death. One thing these accidents have in common is that most are preventable. Avoid injury by following these safety tips:

- Practice with your stand at ground level until you are skilled at using it.
- Choose the stand location carefully—avoid trees with hollow trunks or rotten branches that could fall.
- Inspect your stand each time you climb into it—look for loose bolts or nuts, slick surfaces, cracked or bent metal, and worn chains, cables or straps—check permanent stands for loose steps, rotten wood and exposed nails or screws.
- Always wear a safety belt or harness while climbing up to and down from a stand, and also while on the stand.
- Never carry a bow, arrows or a rifle while climbing—use a rope to haul these items into the stand after you are securely positioned.
- Don't leave equipment on the ground directly below you while climbing—falling on it could worsen your injuries.
- While on the stand, keep yourself on a short leash—8 to 12 inches is plenty.
- Climb down from your stand before you grow sleepy or the weather turns bad and climb down immediately if you feel ill.
- Prepare for an emergency—tell others where you will be and when you will return—carry a whistle, strobe light, airhorn, walkie-talkie or other means of signaling for help.

Your target on a deer should be the chest. Shots in the head or spine will drop a deer in its tracks, but the target is small and the average hunter is wiser to shoot at the chest. A shot in the chest may not drop the animal immediately, but is usually fatal.

"Hold low" is an old slogan among deer hunters. There are several good reasons for this idea. The heart of a deer is located in the lower third of the chest about four inches behind the elbow of the front leg. If the hunter is excited and does not get his or her cheek down on the rifle stock, the bullet will hit higher than the point of aim. Also, most hunters do not realize that the average deer is only about 3 feet tall at the shoulder.

The point of aim for a deer standing broadside should be slightly behind and above the elbow of the front leg. Aiming at this point gives an allowance for error of several inches in all directions. Aim at the base of the neck on a deer facing you.

Extreme uphill and downhill shots should be aimed a little low. If the deer's racing directly from you, let him go. You'll probably shoot his flag and miss him anyway. A running deer is a difficult target and not suggested for beginners. The amount of lead will vary with the speed of the deer, distance and muzzle velocity of the rifle.



The vital area of this deer is within the diamond.

Archery deer hunting

Archery deer hunting is one of the fastest-growing sports in Missouri. Only 73 archers participated in the first archery season in 1946, a three-day, bucks-only season in Crawford County. Currently, approximately 100,000 archers participate in a 96-day, statewide any-deer season and typically harvest more than 20,000 deer.



Many archers previously hunted with a gun but took up the bow because they wanted more of a challenge. In addition, the three-month archery season provides a longer time to enjoy the hunt. Also, the two deer taken on an Archer's Hunting Permit are in addition to deer taken on Firearms Deer Permits. Whatever their reasons for pursuing deer with bow and arrow, these hunters are knowingly handicapping themselves. Because of this handicap they must learn more about deer; in the process they will become better deer hunters. Archers must be able to get close to their targets, since accuracy with a bow declines rapidly beyond 30 yards. Most deer killed with arrows are shot at 20 yards or less.

How does an archer get so close to a deer? The advice from one archer of long experience and some success is: "Go often, go to the same place each time and use a tree blind." Most archers hunt from tree stands about 10 to 15 feet high. The general rules for location of the stand and hunting techniques are similar to those suggested

for the gun hunter, but some additional techniques are needed. The archer must be especially aware of wind direction. Some archers tie a six-inch length of thread to the upper limb of their bow, to serve as a miniature windsock.

Archers sometimes build a blind of natural vegetation. The blind should blend with the surroundings, but it does not need to be as solid as a duck blind. It should be roomy enough for the archer to draw a bow without hindrance and should be about shoulder-high when the archer is sitting on a small stool or other seat.

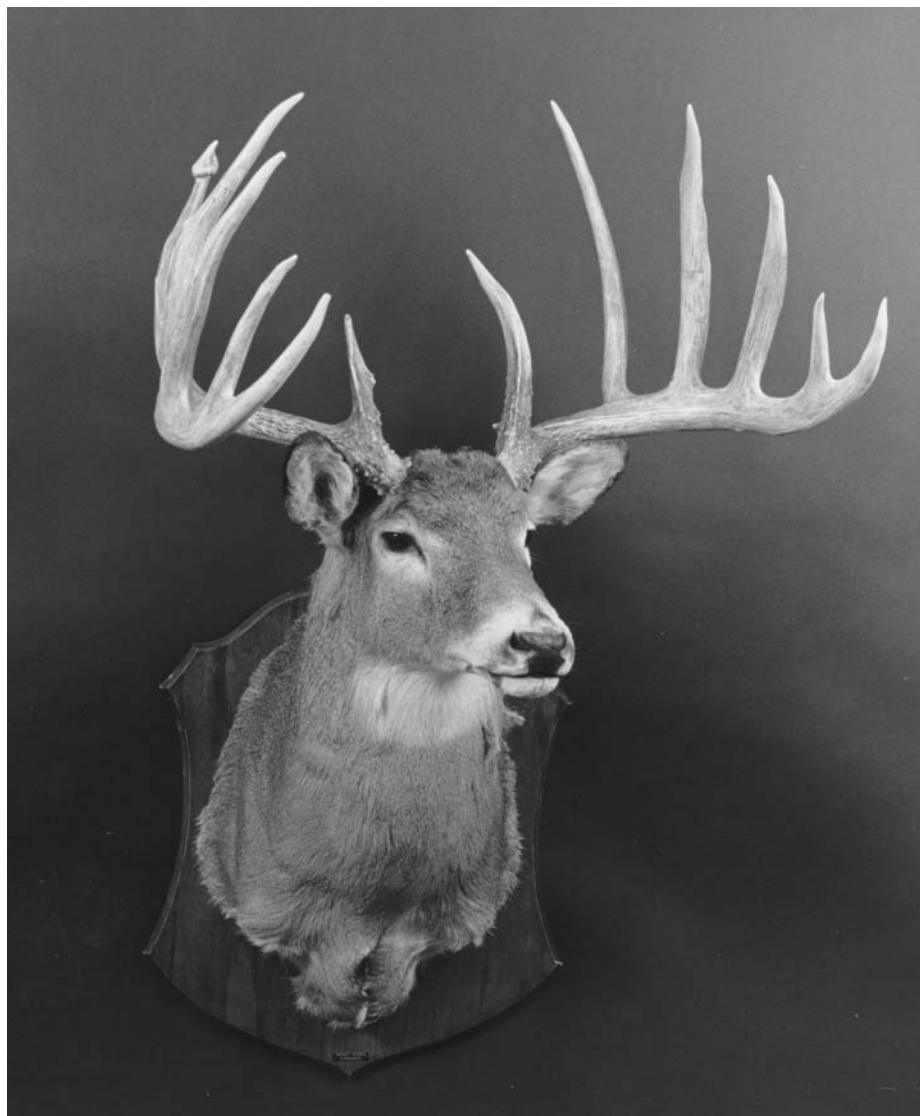
In contrast to the bright clothing worn by the hunter with a gun, the archer should wear dark-colored clothing (preferably of a camouflage design) which will blend with the surroundings. Some archers use camouflage paint or burned cork to darken their face and hands. However, under some circumstances, archers are required to wear hunter orange.

The experts also suggest that archers pace off the distance to the point where they expect to shoot at a deer, check the anticipated flight path of the arrow and trim away branches or small twigs that might deflect an arrow.

What equipment is needed? Basically, a bow, a half-dozen practice arrows, a half-dozen hunting arrows, a quiver, an arm guard and a finger tab or glove.

Hunting bows are of three types: straight (longbow), recurved and compound. They are made from a variety of materials including metals, woods and fiberglass. Bows are classed according to the amount of pull (in pounds) that is required to draw the string to 28 inches. Most hunters in Missouri use a bow with a pull of 50/60 pounds. The compound bow is a relatively recent innovation that was developed in Missouri. It uses a system of pulleys to relax draw weight at full draw by as much as 85 percent. Arrows shot from a compound have a flatter trajectory and are faster than those shot from a comparable recurved bow. The majority of today's archers use compound bows.

Beginning archers tend to select a bow that is too strong for them. The best way to pick a bow is to visit an organized archery club and get the advice of experienced archers. Also, at the club you will be able to exam-



This buck, third largest typical white-tailed deer known to exist, was taken in Randolph County in 1971 by Larry Gibson. It scored 205 0/8 on the Boone and Crockett scale.

ine many different kinds of bows and choose the type best suited for you.

Hunting arrows are made of wood, fiberglass, carbon fiber or aluminum and are tipped with razor-sharp cutting heads called broadheads. The arrow kills by causing hemorrhage, so the blades should be kept as sharp as possible. Practice arrows and hunting arrows should be of the same weight and both should be matched to the strength of the bow.

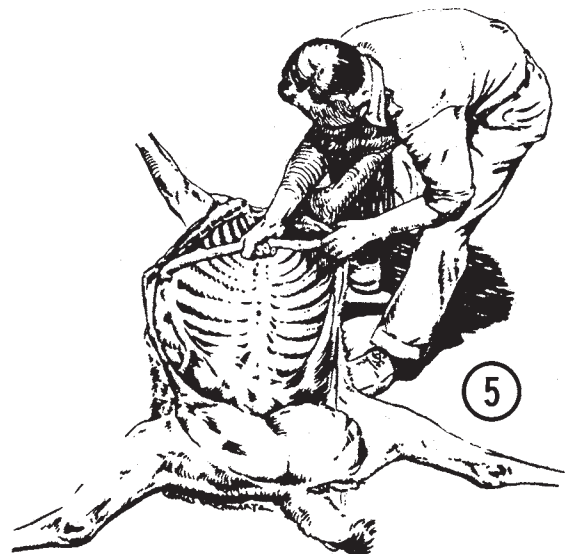
A back quiver or leg quiver is fine for target shooting, but most hunters prefer the bow quiver which holds extra arrows on the bow ready for fast reloading.

Target practice is even more important to the archer than to the hunter with a gun. This practice is much easier to come by, however, because you can shoot at a sturdy backstop in your yard. It is also cheaper because the arrows can be used over and over again. Practice until you can put that first arrow into a 6-inch circle at 30 yards, then try shooting at targets downhill and uphill. The field range of an organized club is a good place to learn to hit targets at different distances and different elevations.



Field dressing your deer

1. Cut through hide along centerline of belly from brisket to vent. Deepen cut through belly muscles using fingers to guide knife and avoid cutting intestines or paunch. (See enlarged sketch.)
2. Cut deeply around anus. Remove it with intestines. Separate hindquarters by splitting pelvic bone with sharp, heavy knife or hand ax.
3. Open chest cavity, if desired, by splitting the cartilage that joins the ribs to the breastbone. Split muscle (diaphragm), separating chest from stomach cavity.
4. Sever gullet and windpipe as far forward as possible. Pull heart, liver, lungs, paunch and intestines out on the ground.
5. Prop body cavity open with sticks and cool quickly by hanging with head up in a shady, airy place. Let it hang this way for about an hour before moving it to camp or car.



Field dressing

A deer down is not necessarily a deer dead, so reload your rifle, wait at a short distance for a few minutes, and approach cautiously from behind the deer's head. Set your rifle aside only after you are certain the deer is dead. If the eye does not blink when touched with a stick, he's yours. Now is the time to fix your deer transportation tag securely around the hind leg.

Dress the deer immediately to ensure a rapid loss of body heat (see Field Dressing Your Deer). Hang animal head-up or lay it on a slope with rump lower than shoulders.

Strong juices from the paunch will taint the meat and should be removed if the animal was gut shot or if you accidentally cut the paunch while field dressing the deer. A rag or bunches of leaves may be used to wipe out the juices or they may be washed out with water. Some articles state the carcass should not be washed with water, but high-pressure hoses are used as standard procedure in slaughterhouses.

A piece of cloth wrapped around the carcass will keep out flies and dirt as you drag it out of the woods or transport it.

The carcass should be dragged out of the woods and not carried on your shoulders. A deer on the shoulders could invite a shot by another hunter. The antlers of a buck make a good handle for dragging. Some hunters tie the front feet behind the head of the carcass to keep them from catching on brush. A strong stick between the hind hocks will provide a good handle for dragging does or fawns.

The deer should be kept as clean and as cool as possible during transport. Do not put the deer on the hood or front fender where it will be subjected to heat from the motor. A plastic bag full of ice placed inside the carcass will keep it cool if you have a long trip home.

TROPHY TIPS

Trophy preparation

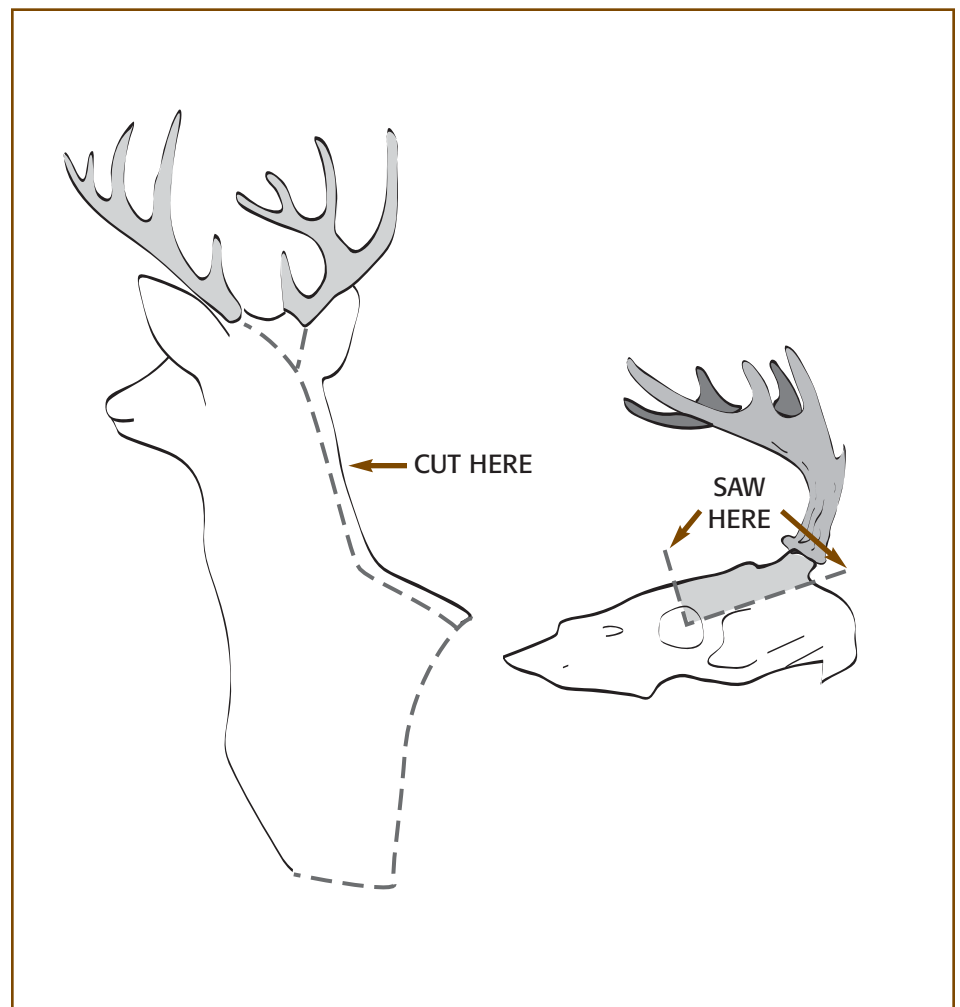
Deer hunting is indeed an exciting sport and trophies are popular reminders of successful days afield. Head mounts, racks and hides are the most common deer hunting trophies. However, deer feet are often used as gun racks, lamp bases and bookends. Hides also can be used to make items of clothing, wallets and purses. Whether you decide to make your own trophy or leave the job to a professional, the way you handle your deer from the moment it is downed will affect the quality of the product.

For instance, if you plan to mount your deer head, do not cut the animal's throat. In fact, make no cuts in the head and neck region other than

those indicated in the following diagram. This method of skinning will allow plenty of hide for a full head-neck-and-shoulder mount. After skinning, sever the head from the neck and take head, antlers and hide to your taxidermist. If you anticipate any trouble, you might let your taxidermist tackle the caping chore. A list of licensed taxidermists is available on request from the Department of Conservation, Jefferson City.

Another method of displaying antlers that is inexpensive, yet attractive, is to attach them directly to a backboard or wall. Simply saw off a good, solid section of skull with the antlers and fasten through a hole drilled in the middle. Deer hide or felt can be used to cover the skull plate, if desired.

There are a number of reputable companies that will process your deer hide for you. If you have that do-it-yourself desire, however, you can follow these step-by-step instructions for home tanning.



Home tanning technique

by Thomas J. Kick

Outlined below are the various steps necessary to make leather suitable for articles of use, or left whole as remembrances of the hunt. No fancy tools are needed and you will receive good results for a minimum of time and labor.

Materials needed:

- Dull Knife
- Rubber Gloves
- Naphtha Thinner
- Sawdust
- Plastic Buckets
- Salt
- Alum
- Water
- Neatsfoot Oil
- Hydrated Lime (optional)
- Wood Ashes (optional)
- Boric Acid (optional)

Plastic buckets are recommended for holding the solutions. Chemicals can be purchased locally. Shoe repair shops sell neatsfoot oil. Canning salt is available at your supermarket. Naphtha thinner, also called benzine, and hydrated lime can be obtained from a hardware store. Alum and boric acid can be purchased from a drugstore. In reference to the use of all of these chemicals, be sure to read all labels and cautions and obey them. When handling the solutions, use rubber gloves.

Step 1 Scraping

The first step is to remove all flesh and fat from the skin. This is a prerequisite to the actual tanning process and is time well spent. This should be done with a dull knife while the skin is fresh. (If you cannot work on the skin when it is fresh, freeze it until you are ready and then



allow it to thaw. Pelts that have been salted and dried or just dried should be soaked in water until limp.) Then rub salt onto the flesh side and roll it up, flesh side in, allowing it to set for two or three days. When you unroll the skin, you will find that the salt has loosened fat and flesh that held fast the first time you scraped the skin.

Step 2 Degreasing

When you have the skin free of all flesh and fat, it is time to degrease it. Use naphtha thinner and rub it well into the hair and onto the flesh side. Be sure to use naphtha outdoors and away from flame because it is highly flammable. After you have worked the naphtha well into the skin, rub sawdust into the hair and onto the flesh side 3 or 4 times to absorb the naphtha and dissolved grease. Shake out each application of sawdust until you have removed the naphtha-grease complex from the skin. Then rinse the skin in 7 or 8 rinses of clear water to remove any remaining salt, naphtha or sawdust.

Step 2a Removing Hair

At this point, if you desire, the hair may be removed from the skin. (If you want to tan the skin with hair on, go directly to Step 3.) This is done by soaking the skin in a solution of hydrated lime, wood ashes and water (1/4 pound hydrated lime and 1/2 cup wood ash to 1 gallon of water). Soak for several days until the hair can be pushed

or scraped off the skin with a dull knife. Fully developed coats of hair from skins taken in the fall and winter are generally easier to dehair because of the uniform length of the hair. Hides taken other times of the year take more time to dehair because many smaller undeveloped hairs tend to stay in the skin when the longer hairs are sloughed off. After the hair has been removed, wash the skin thoroughly in several rinses of clear warm water and then place it overnight in a solution of boric acid and water (1 ounce boric acid crystals to 1 gallon water). This neutralizes the lime left in the skin from the dehairing solution. After removing the skin from the boric acid solution, rinse it before going to Step 3.



Step 3 Tanning

The skin is now ready to go into the tanning solution where it will stay for 7 days. To make the tanning solution, dissolve 1/2 pound salt and 1/4 pound alum per gallon of water, making enough solution to cover the skin. Stir the solution daily. After a week, remove the skin from solution, rinse it in clear water and allow it to drain, but do not let it dry out. Rub warm neatsfoot oil onto the flesh side (4) and, while keeping it out of direct sunlight, let the skin begin to dry. During the drying process, pull and stretch the skin in every direction (5). A board clamped in a vise provides edges over which you can work the hide back and forth to help in the softening process. Continue this at periodic intervals until the skin is dry. At this point the skin should be white on the flesh side, and soft, supple and ready to use.

If the skin dries too quickly or should you need to leave it for several days during this step and the skin gets stiff, merely dampen it with a wet sponge until it becomes limp again and resume the manipulation of the hide. To remove any tissue or unevenness on the flesh side of the finished hide, sand it with a piece of coarse sandpaper (60 or 80 grit). This will give the hide a suede look and enhance its attractiveness.

When using your finished leather, take advantage of its natural thickness. You'll find the neck skin thicker than the back, the back thicker than the sides and the belly skin thinnest of all. If you need a uniform thickness for your project, go back to your coarse sandpaper and a little



arm action. A table belt sander can also be used for thinning down a hide but it can take off a lot of material quickly so beware.

This is a tried and proven process and is used today by many professional tanners and taxidermists. I am sure you will be pleased not only with the results, but also with the feeling of having done it yourself.

Growing trophy antlers

Antler size is primarily affected by three factors: nutrition, genetics and age. The landowner or deer hunter can influence each of these factors to some degree.

Nutrition can be improved by improving the deer habitat on the land you hunt. Technical assistance, seed and wildlife plants are available to improve habitat on private lands through your local Conservation Agent, Wildlife Management Biologist or Private Land Conservationist.

Given the generally small size of private land holdings in Missouri, and the relatively large home ranges of white-tails, genetics usually cannot be effectively manipulated.

Age can be influenced by not harvesting the 6- to 10-point bucks and allowing them to mature. The age at which most bucks produce their largest antlers is 5 1/2 to 7 1/2 years. Of course, not harvesting a 10-point buck may be the biggest challenge of your life! But, following these general guidelines can and will increase the number of trophy bucks available for harvest in your hunting area.

Show-Me Big Bucks Club

The Missouri Show-Me Big Bucks Club is a statewide organization affiliated with the Boone and Crockett Club. The purposes of the club are: to officially recognize Missouri trophy deer heads and to honor the successful hunter; to promote interest in and appreciation for Missouri deer hunting; to promote sportsmanship among deer hunters; to establish and maintain a permanent record of trophy deer heads taken in Missouri; and to assist eligible members to receive national recognition from the Boone and Crockett Club.

Membership in the club is available to any hunter who has, during any legal hunting season, taken a trophy that meets the standards of the club. Scoring is based on the system of measurements developed by the Boone and Crockett Club. Official club scorers are located throughout the state. Membership in the Show-Me Big Bucks Club will be based on scores submitted by the official club scorers, verified if necessary by officials of the club. Trophies that meet Boone and Crockett standards when measured by Show-Me Club scorers will be remeasured and certified by authorized scorers of the Boone and Crockett Club.

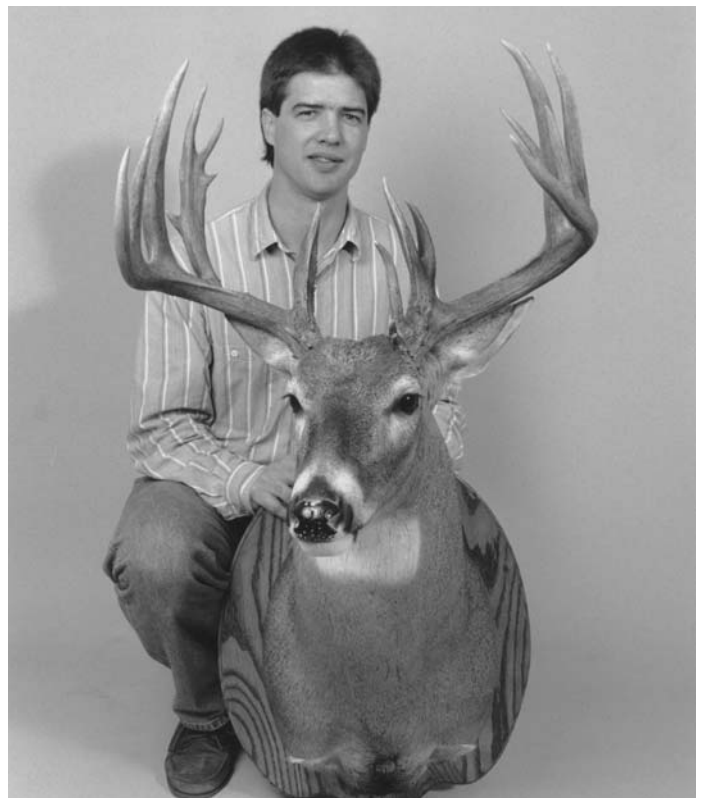
Many beautiful racks of antlers are taken in Missouri each fall. Larry Gibson (see page 9) took our best typical trophy head in 1971 in Randolph County. The antlers rated 205 points on the Boone and Crockett system and ranked third in the latest edition of the club's records of North American Big Game. The world-record non-typical whitetail was found in St. Louis County in 1981 (see above). It scored 333 7/8.

Minimum scores for membership in the Show-Me Big Bucks Club are 140 points for typical and 155 points for non-typical deer taken statewide.

Do you have a record set of antlers? Try scoring it according to the instructions on an official score sheet available from the club. A score of more than 140 is exceptional and should be entered in the record book. For further information about the club, contact a Department of Conservation representative.



This world-record non-typical white-tailed buck was found dead, apparently of natural causes. It weighed 250 pounds and scored 333 7/8 on the Boone and Crockett scale.



David Reid took this non-typical buck in October 1991 in Adair County, using a compound bow. It qualified for the Show-Me Big Bucks Club with a score of 188 6/8 on the Boone and Crockett scale.

PREPARING VENISON

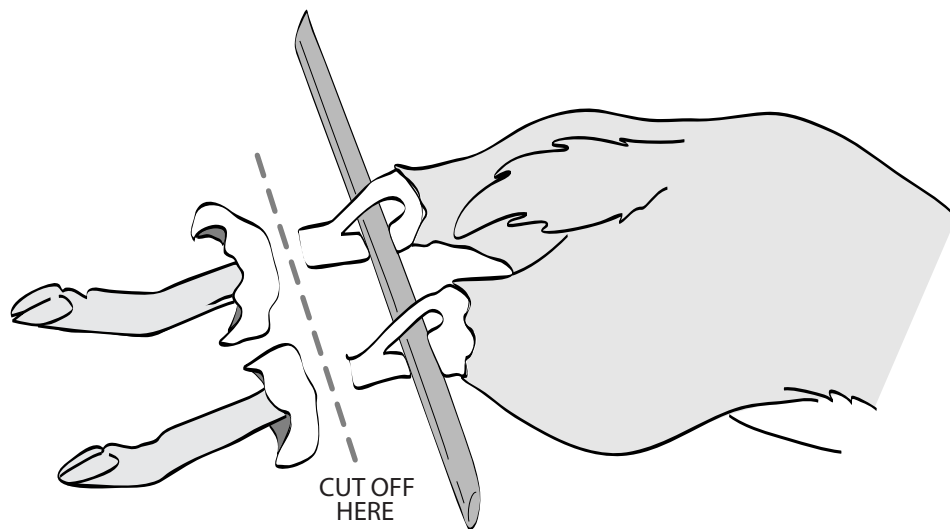
Venison is a healthy and delicious meat choice, but the road to a tasty meal requires care in the processing and preparation. If you've had gamy tasting venison before, chances are the offensive taste was obtained through processing or cooking. The meat's quality is a result of the deer's age, sex and diet. Older deer have tougher meat, while the meat of bucks in rut is stronger tasting from the stress of breeding season.

For nutritional value, venison is low in fat and calories and rich in protein. Use low-fat cooking techniques, such as broiling, grilling, baking or stewing instead of frying to keep the venison healthy.

All in all, just keep in mind the deer you are cooking and match it with the right cooking technique—roasting and stewing for tougher cuts and frying, broiling and grilling for more tender cuts.

Processing

For better venison, hang the deer before processing. Leave the skin on to prevent dehydration and keep the meat clean. A handy way to hang the carcass (and also remove scent glands) is illustrated above. Hang the deer to drain blood and cool to 50 degrees F. within 6 hours of harvest. (Freezing the venison more quickly will result in tougher meat.)



Aging venison any longer is not necessary, but when stored at 34-40 degrees F. for up to 8 days the taste and tenderness of venison cuts can be improved.

The following tools are needed for home processing: hand saw, cutting board or solid table, a flexible knife for boning, a stout knife for trimming fat and making larger cuts, a knife sharpener, freezer paper, plastic wrap, masking or freezer tape, and a marker. To help sort meats for stewing and grinding, large plastic or metal tubs or bowls are handy.

To process the deer, remove the skin and take care to keep the hair side away from the carcass. Be sure to remove as much fat as possible (deer fat has a strong flavor). Trim any bruises or gunshot damage and wash the outside. After dripping dry, the carcass is ready to be cut.

There are two basic methods for cutting the carcass. The boneless

method produces a milder flavor; all bone is removed and the more tender muscles are used for steaks, roasts, and stew; the less tender muscles are ground. One point to remember is that young-of-the-year deer are so tender that the whole animal can be cut into steaks. You can also use the method similar to one used to cut up a beef carcass. This method results in popular cuts such as rib, T-bone, sirloin and round steaks. Combinations of the two methods may be used.

Regardless of which method is used, use the chart on page 16 to produce wholesale cuts similar to those at a grocer. Start by removing the neck for boning and split the carcass by cutting down the center of the backbone. Then either bone or cut with the bone-in cutting method as used in beef cutting. Sawing through bone spreads the bone marrow across cuts of meat, sometimes creating a bad flavor. If you saw through cuts, be sure to scrape away any marrow or bone fragments. Also, carefully remove all animal hair.

Nutrient content of domestic and wild game meats

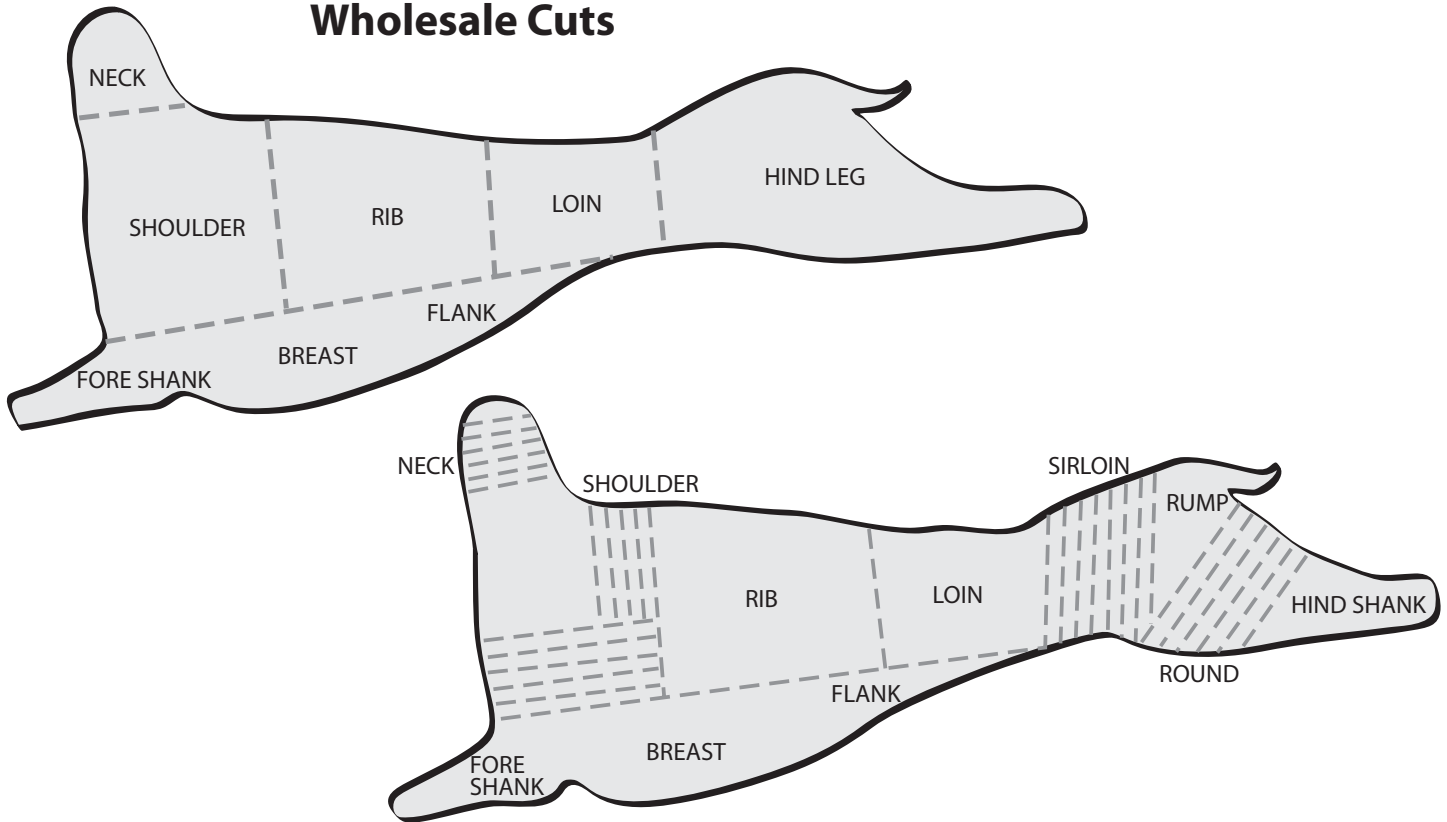
(cooked, 3-ounce serving, unless otherwise indicated)

<u>Domestic</u>	<u>Calories</u>	<u>Protein</u>	<u>Iron</u>	<u>Total Fat</u>	<u>Saturated Fat</u>	<u>Cholesterol</u>
Beef	184	25	3	8	3	73
Pork	180	25	1	8	3	73
Chicken	161	25	1	8	2	76
(roasted, skin off)						
<u>Wild Meats</u>						
Deer	134	26	4	3	1	95
Turkey	121	26	—	1	—	55

Wholesale Cuts

Place the half carcass on a cutting table and remove the flank, breast and shank. Remove the shoulder by cutting between ribs 5 and 6 perpendicular to the backbone. Separate the rib from the loin behind the last rib and cut the loin from the sirloin in the middle of the last lumbar vertebra. The wholesale cuts of deer are neck, shoulder, rib or rack, loin, hind leg, foreshank, breast and flank.

Wholesale Cuts



Cutting Procedure

The wholesale cuts of deer may be boned or cut in the conventional ways.

The neck may be left as a roast or boned for ground venison. To make the steaks more tender, they should be cut across the forearm part of the shoulder and the next cuts made across the blade end of the shoulder. Shorten the rib and loin by cutting parallel to the backbone and below the loin muscle. Then cut the chops about 1 inch thick.

Sirloin chops about 1 inch thick are cut from the sirloin up to the hip joint. The triangular shaped rump portion is then removed and used as roast, either with or without the bone. Round steaks about 3/4-inch thick are cut from the round portion, or this portion may be boned and rolled for roasts. The foreshank, flank and breast are usually boned for ground venison and stew meat or for fresh sausage or dry summer sausage.

Venison cuts can be used in a variety of dishes, although many people choose to make ground venison out of much of their deer. Small electric grinders are inexpensive or come as

attachments to larger appliances and can be used for making smaller amounts of ground meat. Local processing plants will grind by the pound if you want larger amounts of venison ground. As a type of sausage, add your favorite seasonings to ground burger as you grind or before freezing—salt, pepper, onion and garlic salts, smoked salt, basil and oregano are good.

If you are not sure of how much ground venison you will use, try freezing larger chunks of shoulder or round cuts. They can be thawed later and used for a variety of recipes—as roasts, sliced for steaks, cut in strips for jerky or ground for sausage or burger.

Packaging for the freezer

Successful freezing depends on proper packaging to protect food from the dry, cold air of the freezer that would rob it of moisture and flavor.

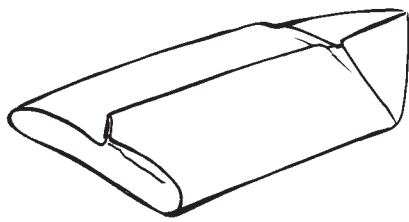
Vacuum packaging works well with venison. For paper wraps, ordinary

kraft or waxed papers are not adequate protection for foods to be frozen. Use moisture-vapor-proof material designed especially to wrap foods for freezing. These materials are strong, easy to handle, moisture-proof, resist grease, and will not transfer odors. Plastic kraft-laminated freezer papers are probably the most economical and are easier to use in most cases. Freezer papers are found at most supermarkets on the shelf with other canning and freezing supplies.

Wrapping

To easily separate frozen chops and steaks, place a double thickness of waxed or freezer paper between each piece with plastic sides to the meat. For the best packaging results, first wrap the cuts of venison in a quality plastic wrap then cover with freezer paper to ward off freezer burn. Double-wrapping is recommended.

To determine serving sizes and portions for freezing, a quick rule of thumb is to allow about 1/4 pound of meat per person for serving. (For ground meat, that is equal to about a fist-sized portion.)



Before packaging, cover sharp bone edges with a double thickness of freezer paper so they will not puncture the wrapping paper.

The drugstore fold is an effective method for sealing moisture in and air out. (See illustration above.) Place the meat in the center of the paper. Bring the opposite edges together and fold over an inch or two at a time until tight against the meat. Tightly fold one end, then the other. Turn each end underneath and secure with masking or freezer tape.

Labeling

Label each package clearly with a permanent marker. Make the letters large enough for easy reading. Labels should include the owner's name, address and permit number; the name of the cut; the quantity; and the packaging date.

Freezer Storage Time

Venison can be stored in the home freezer at 6 degrees F. or lower for about nine months.

Cooking with Frozen Meat

To thaw in refrigerator, allow about 3 hours per pound for small roasts and steak packages and 4 to 5 hours for larger roasts. If thawed at room temperature, allow 1 hour per pound. Or, defrost in microwave according to weight instructions of appliance.

Frozen meat may be cooked satisfactorily either by thawing prior to or during cooking. When cooking steaks or roasts from the frozen state, allow additional cooking time.

When broiling, place frozen steaks and ground venison patties further from the heat or at a lower temperature than thawed cuts so the meat will be cooked to the desired degree of doneness without becoming too brown on the outside.

Making sausage and jerky

Venison can make excellent sausages and jerky. Avoid using deer fat in the sausage; it makes the flavor stronger and does not store well. If you choose to add fat, pork fat works well for ground, processed meats because it adds flavor and moisture to the meat and keeps well. The amount of fat you add to your sausage can vary with your personal taste and diet needs.

Basic Deer Sausage

Ground Meat Mix

5 lbs. venison
1 lb. fresh pork fat
2-4 tablespoons salt

Grind the meat and fat thoroughly, mix in salt and add one of the seasoning recipes. Knead seasoning mix into meat. Keep mixture cold. For larger quantities, ratio ingredients.

Salami Seasoning

2 tablespoons sugar
1 tablespoon cayenne pepper
1 teaspoon ground cloves
1 tablespoon fine-ground pepper
2 teaspoons garlic powder
3/4 cup dry milk (mix to a thin paste)

Sausage Seasoning

2 tablespoons sugar
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 1/2 tablespoons chili powder
1 tablespoon garlic powder
1 1/2 teaspoons ground celery seed
3/4 cup dry milk (mix to a thin paste)

Pepperoni Seasoning

2 tablespoons sugar
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 1/2 teaspoons leaf oregano
1 teaspoon thyme
1 tablespoon cracked pepper
1 tablespoon fine-ground pepper
3 tablespoons chili powder
1 teaspoon whole anise
3/4 cup dry milk (mix to a thin paste)

To stuff and cook the sausage, you can use casings available from a local meat processor or aluminum foil wrapping.

If using casings, follow instructions for the type (run water through

animal casings). To fill, use stuffing attachments for your meat grinder and pack tightly into casings.

For foil wrapping, place 1-2 pounds of mixture on a rectangle of foil and pull up opposite sides. Press to pack meat tightly, then fold the foil tightly against the meat. Turn and roll ends until tight.

Bake sausage in the oven by placing the stuffed casings or foil on a rack in a baking pan. Bake for 1 hour and 20 minutes at 300 degrees F. Remove and cool rapidly.

Summer Sausage

2 pounds ground venison
1 cup water
3 tablespoons quick cure salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper
1/8 teaspoon garlic powder
1/4 teaspoon onion salt
1/2 teaspoon mustard seed
1 tablespoon liquid smoke

Mix all ingredients well. Shape on aluminum foil in two rolls. Twist ends of rolls to secure. Refrigerate for 24 hours. Place in kettle and cover with water and boil 1 hour. Remove and punch holes in foil to drain water.

Venison Jerky

Buck's Jerky

2 pounds venison strips, cut 1/4-1/8" thick
1/4 cup soy sauce
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
1/2 teaspoon onion powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
A few drops of liquid smoke
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
1/4 teaspoon garlic
1 teaspoon hickory smoke salt
Dash of cayenne pepper



Hot Jerky

1 pound venison strips, cut
1/4-1/8" thick
4 teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon each of pepper, chili
powder, garlic powder and
onion powder
1/4 teaspoon cayenne
3 dashes liquid smoke
1/2 cup water

To cut thin, even slices, use meat that is partially frozen. Cut the strips lengthwise with the grain and about 1 to 2 inches wide. Mix the seasonings and place the meat and seasonings in a resealable plastic bag. Work the seasonings into the meat with your hands. Refrigerate for several hours or overnight.

To dry, place on dehydrator trays and follow the directions of the appliance. Jerky can also be dried in an oven by hanging the strips with toothpicks from the racks. Cook for 10-12 hours at 150 degrees F. with the door slightly ajar to allow moisture to escape. Place a tray under jerky to catch drips.

Note: For more tender jerky, ground venison may be substituted for the venison strips when using a dehydrator. To make thin strips, use a jerky gun or roll out meat between two pieces of waxed paper by using a rolling pin. Form into strips by shaping with a pizza cutter. Place strips on drying racks.

Venison cookery

Take care in cooking cuts of venison. Always trim off all fat and as many of the tendons as possible before cooking. Most cuts can be prepared similar to beef. Tender cuts, such as the loin, rib and sirloin, can be broiled or roasted. Shoulder and hind cuts, such as round steak and arm and blade chops, are best cooked by stewing, braising or pot-roasting. Use tougher cuts in stews and ground venison. Try to keep meat moist and do not over-cook.

Marinades

Marinating venison enhances the flavor, moisturizes and helps tenderize the meat. Here are a few basic marinades for use with grilling (steaks or kabobs), stir frying, broiling and baking. Commercial marinades are also available at your supermarket. If steaks or other cuts of venison may be tough, tenderize with a mallet before placing in marinade.

Red Wine Marinade

1/2 cup dry red wine
1/3 cup chopped onion
2 tablespoons olive oil
1/2 teaspoon thyme, rosemary or
marjoram
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon coarse pepper
1 clove garlic, minced

Mix together. Pour over meat in plastic bag and knead mixture together. Marinate at room temperature for 30 minutes or in the refrigerator for up to 6 hours.

Teriyaki Marinade

1/4 cup soy sauce
2 tablespoons orange juice
1 tablespoon molasses
1 1/2 teaspoons grated ginger root
(or 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger)
1 teaspoon dry mustard
1 clove garlic

Mix together. Pour over meat in plastic bag and knead mixture together. Marinate in refrigerator for 10 hours or overnight. Vegetables can be marinated in mixture for kabobs or stir-fry, if desired.



Herb-Lemon Marinade

1/3 cup lemon juice
1/4 cup olive oil
1/4 cup Worcestershire sauce
1 tablespoon honey
1/2 teaspoon basil, crushed
1/2 teaspoon thyme, crushed
1/8 teaspoon garlic salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper

Mix together. Pour over meat in plastic bag and knead mixture together. Marinate in refrigerator for 6-10 hours. Marinade is good with vegetables for grilling or stir-fry.

Fajita Marinade

1/2 cup salsa
1/2 teaspoon pepper
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
1/2 cup red wine
1 garlic clove, crushed
1 tablespoon lime juice

Works best with thinly sliced venison. Mix together. Pour over meat in plastic bag and knead mixture together. Refrigerate 1-6 hours. Use as a stir-fry for fajitas or your favorite southwestern recipe.

Recipes

Many traditional recipes for preparing venison are found in *Cy Littlebee's Guide to Cooking Fish and Game*, available from the Missouri Department of Conservation, Jefferson City. Here are a few popular recipes adapted for venison.

Venison-Bacon Appetizer

1 bottle Italian salad dressing
1 pound venison steak, tenderized
10 ounces bacon
Jalapeno peppers or water chestnuts

Cut venison in thin strips 1 inch by 3 inches. Marinate in salad dressing for 6-12 hours. Remove venison strips from marinade and roll around a chestnut or pepper, then with a bacon slice cut in half on outside. Secure with a toothpick. Grill or broil 10-12 minutes or until done.

Quesadillas

1 pound ground venison
Salsa
8 large flour tortillas
1/2 cup chopped green pepper
4 chopped green onions
2 cups shredded Monterey Jack cheese
Refried beans, optional
Jalapeno peppers, optional

Cook ground venison adding 1/2 cup salsa and salt and pepper to taste. Remove from skillet. Spread refried beans on half of each tortilla, if desired. Top with peppers, onions and seasoned venison. Sprinkle cheese over half of each tortilla and fold in half, pressing gently. Cook quesadillas in a large skillet over medium heat until lightly browned, turning once. Cut into wedges and serve with salsa. Serves 4.

Venison Pot Pie

1 pound venison, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
2 tablespoons cooking oil
2 cups beef broth
1 teaspoon thyme, crushed
1/4 teaspoon pepper
1 10-ounce package frozen peas and carrots
2 medium potatoes, peeled and cubed
1/2 cup beef broth
1/3 cup flour
3/4 cup flour
3/4 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon sugar
3 tablespoons butter
1/3 cup milk

Remove all fat from meat. Brown meat in hot oil in a large saucepan. Stir in the 2 cups broth, thyme and pepper. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat, cover and simmer for 45 minutes. Add vegetables and simmer until meat is tender (15-30 minutes). Mix the 1/2 cup broth and 1/3 cup flour. Add to meat mixture and cook until thickened. Pour into a 2-quart casserole dish. Prepare the biscuit topping by stirring together the 3/4 cup flour, baking powder, sugar and a dash of salt. Cut in the butter. Make a well in the center and add the milk. Stir until just mixed, then spoon in 6 mounds atop the meat and gravy. Bake in a 450-degree F. oven for 12 minutes. Makes 5 servings.



Venison Pizza

1 pkg. yeast
4 cups flour
2 teaspoons salt
1/4 cup olive oil (optional)
1 1/2 cups warm water

Mix yeast, flour and salt. Add warm water and oil and mix. Knead on a floured surface until dough is soft. Place in greased bowl to rise for about 1 hour. While dough is rising, prepare the following:

1-2 pounds ground venison
1/2 cup chopped onion
1/2 cup chopped green peppers
Salt and pepper

Brown venison with peppers and onions in a skillet. Remove from skillet and set aside.

2 cups sliced mushrooms
1 clove garlic, sliced
1 cup green peppers, sliced in strips

Sauté peppers and garlic in olive oil. Add mushrooms and finish cooking. Drain and set aside. Prepare the following:

- Pizza sauce or tomato paste
- Diced pepperoni or Canadian bacon
- Grated mozzarella cheese

Roll out half of dough to fit pizza stone or pan. Spread on a thin layer of sauce, then cover with half of venison, pepperoni or bacon, mushrooms and peppers, and then cheese. Repeat for the other pizza. Bake in a 450-degree F. oven for 15-20 minutes. Makes 5 servings.

Venison Chili

Good for strong or tough venison
1-2 pounds ground venison (or cuts in 1-inch cubes)
1 cup chopped onion
1/2 cup chopped green pepper
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 14 1/2-ounce can tomatoes, chopped
1 15-ounce can dark red kidney beans, rinsed and drained
1 8-ounce can tomato sauce
2 to 3 teaspoons chili powder
1/2 teaspoon basil
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper

Place venison, onion, pepper and garlic in a large saucepan and brown in about 2 tablespoons oil. Add the remainder of ingredients and bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer for 30 minutes to 1 hour until meat is tender. Serves 4-6.

Venison and Vegetable Stir-fry

1 cup water
1/4 cup soy sauce
2 tablespoons white wine
2 teaspoons cornstarch
1 pound venison, tenderized
2 tablespoons oil
10 green onions, chopped
1 cup mushrooms, sliced
5 cloves garlic, sliced
3 cups broccoli and green peppers, chopped
Hot cooked rice

Stir together water, soy sauce, wine and cornstarch for marinade. Pound venison cuts with a meat tenderizer and cut into 1/2-inch pieces. Mix meat with half the marinade. Refrigerate 30 minutes, remove and drain. Heat oil in wok or large skillet. Stir-fry onions, mushrooms, vegetables and garlic. Remove from wok or skillet. Add venison to hot pan. Stir-fry until done. Push meat to center and add remaining marinade. Cook until thick, then add vegetables to coat. Serve on cooked rice. Serves 4.

Basic Venison Burgers

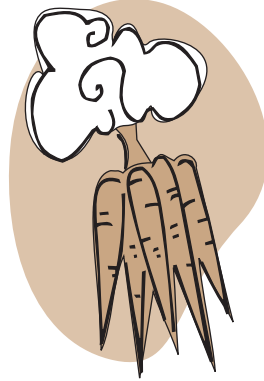
- 1 pound ground venison
- 3 tablespoons finely chopped onion
- 3 tablespoons finely chopped green pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon salt and pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon hickory smoke salt
- 1/2 teaspoon seasoning salt or one clove garlic, minced

Mix well. Form into patties and grill, fry or broil.

Swedish Meatballs

- 1 beaten egg
 - 2 tablespoons milk
 - 1 cup soft bread crumbs (2 slices)
 - 1/2 cup onion, chopped fine
 - 1/4 cup snipped parsley
 - 1/4 teaspoon pepper
 - 1 teaspoon salt
 - 1 pound ground venison
 - 1/2 pound ground pork
 - 1 tablespoon butter
 - 2 tablespoons flour
 - 2 teaspoons beef bouillon
 - 2 cups milk
 - 2 cups of mushrooms, sliced, (or 1 can cream of mushroom soup)
 - 1 tablespoon sherry
- Hot cooked noodles, rice or potatoes

In a mixing bowl, combine egg and 2 tablespoons milk. Stir in bread crumbs, onion, parsley, pepper and salt. Add meats and mix well. Shape into 30 meatballs. Cook meatballs in a large skillet in hot butter, turning to brown evenly. Remove from skillet when done and drain. Leave about 2 tablespoons of drippings in the skillet and add the flour, bouillon and a dash of pepper to the drippings and mix. Stir in the milk and mushrooms or soup. Cook and stir over medium heat until thickened and bubbly. Cook and stir for 1 minute and add meatballs to skillet. Heat through.



Venison Pot Roast

- 2-3 pound boneless venison roast
- 2 tablespoons cooking oil
- 2/3 cup tomato juice
- 1/2 cup finely chopped onion
- 1/2 cup finely chopped carrot
- 2 teaspoons beef bouillon
- 3 tablespoons flour
- 1/2 cup sour cream or plain yogurt

Remove all fat from roast. In a 4- to 6-quart pot, brown meat in oil. Blot any remaining oil or fat. Add juice, onion, carrot and bouillon. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer, covered, for 1 1/2 to 2 hours until meat is tender. Remove meat. To make a sauce, add water to juices to equal 2 cups of liquid. Stir flour into sour cream or yogurt. Stir into juices in pot. Cook and stir over medium heat until thickened and bubbly. Season to taste. Serves 4-5.

Pot Roast and Vegetables

- 2-3 pound boneless venison roast
- 2 tablespoons cooking oil
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1 clove sliced garlic
- 2 teaspoons beef bouillon
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Peeled potatoes, carrots and onions

Remove all fat from roast. In a 4- to 6-quart pot, brown meat in oil. Blot any remaining oil or fat. Add onion, garlic, bouillon, salt and pepper. Pour in 1 to 2 cups water and cover. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer, covered, for 1 1/2 to 2 hours until meat is tender. Add vegetables cut into chunks for quicker cooking. Make sure vegetables are covered with broth or add enough water to cover. Allow vegetables to simmer in broth for 30 minutes.

Venison Loin Roast

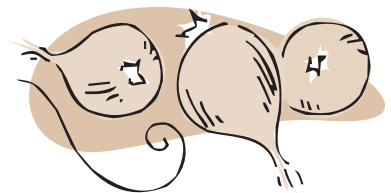
- 1 cup ground pecans or walnuts
- 1/2 cup breadcrumbs
- 2 tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped
- 2 tablespoons oil
- 2 teaspoons coarse black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 3-pound boneless venison loin roast

Combine nuts, breadcrumbs, parsley, oil, pepper and salt in a bowl. Place the roast on a rack in a roast pan and rub with a small amount of oil. Coat the roast with the nut mixture on all sides, pressing to make it stick. Roast in a 425-degree F. oven for 30 minutes or until desired doneness. Let rest for 5 minutes before slicing.

Mushroom and Venison Stew

- Good for strong or tough venison
- 2 tablespoons flour
 - 1-2 pounds venison stew meat, cut in 3/4-inch cubes
 - 2 tablespoons cooking oil
 - 3 teaspoons beef bouillon
 - 4 cups water
 - 1 large onion, cut into wedges
 - 1 clove garlic, sliced
 - 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
 - 1/4 cup red wine
 - 1/2 teaspoon marjoram
 - 1/2 teaspoon oregano
 - 1 bay leaf
 - 1 teaspoon coarse pepper
 - 2 1/2 cups cubed potatoes
 - 1 cup sliced carrots
 - 1 cup sliced celery
 - 1 1/2 cups sliced mushrooms

Drench meat cubes in flour and brown in a large saucepan in hot oil. Drain oil. Add the bouillon, water, onion, garlic, Worcestershire, wine, herbs, salt and pepper. Bring to a boil and simmer until meat is tender (1-2 hours). Stir in potatoes, carrots, celery and mushrooms. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat. Simmer 20-30 minutes until vegetables are done. Remove bay leaf. Serves 6.



Grilled Kabobs

- 1 pound venison sirloin
- 1 recipe lemon-herb marinade (see Marinades)
- 1 medium onion, cut into wedges
- 1 small zucchini, 1/2-inch slices
- 1 red or green pepper, cut in 1-inch pieces
- Whole mushrooms
- Cherry tomatoes



Partially freeze venison and slice 1/4-inch thick. Pour 2/3 of the marinade over venison and refrigerate for 3-4 hours. Steam onion, zucchini and green pepper in microwave until almost done. Remove and drain. Toss all vegetables in remaining marinade to coat. Thread meat and vegetables on metal or bamboo skewers. Grill for 10-12 minutes or until meat is done. Brush with remaining marinade from vegetables. Serves 4.

Swiss Steak

- 1-2 pounds venison round steak
- 3 tablespoons flour
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 2 tablespoons oil
- 1 16-ounce can tomatoes, sliced
- 1 medium onion, sliced and ringed
- 1/2 cup sliced celery
- 1/2 cup sliced carrot
- 1/2 teaspoon thyme
- Rice or noodles

Cut steaks into 4 or more pieces. Mix the flour, salt and pepper. Tenderize meat with a mallet, pounding flour mixture into meat. Brown meat in a large skillet of hot oil. Remove all oil. Add tomatoes, onion, celery, carrot and thyme. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat. Cover and simmer for 1-2 hours, until meat is tender. (Or place in covered casserole dish and bake for 1 hour at 350 degrees F.) Serve with rice or noodles. Makes 4 servings.

Green Bean Stir-Fry

Sauce

- 2 teaspoons cornstarch
- 1/3 cup beef broth
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon sherry
- 1 teaspoon cider vinegar
- 1 tablespoon oil
- 1 pound green beans, trimmed and sliced diagonally
- 2 teaspoons finely minced fresh ginger
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/4 teaspoon hot red pepper flakes
- 1/2 pound ground venison or steak sliced for stir-fry

Mix together all of the sauce ingredients and set aside. Heat the oil in a wok or large skillet and add the green beans. Stir-fry beans for about 4 minutes or until tender. Remove and set beans aside. Add the ginger and garlic to the pan and cook them lightly. Add the pepper and venison, crumbling the venison with a fork or spatula. Stir-fry until meat is done, then add sauce mix. Cook and stir until sauce thickens. Fold in the green beans and heat for 1 minute. Serve with rice or noodles. Serves 4.

Venison Stroganoff

- 1 pound venison sirloin steak
- 1 8-ounce carton sour cream
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 1/2 cup water
- 2 teaspoons beef bouillon
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 2 tablespoons margarine or butter
- 1 1/2 cups sliced mushrooms
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1 clove garlic
- Hot cooked noodles

Partially freeze venison and slice across the grain into bite-size strips. Stir together sour cream and flour. Stir in water, bouillon, salt and pepper. Set aside. In a large skillet, cook and stir the meat in hot butter until done. Remove from skillet. Add mushrooms, onion and garlic. Cook and stir until done. Mix meat and vegetables together. Stir flour mixture into skillet. Cook and stir until thick and bubbly. Serve over noodles. Serves 4.



Happy Camper Venison

- 1 pound ground venison or 4 small chops
- 4 tablespoons butter
- 4 potatoes, peeled and sliced
- 2 medium onions, cleaned and quartered
- 4 carrots, sliced
- Seasoning salt
- Salt and pepper
- Honey

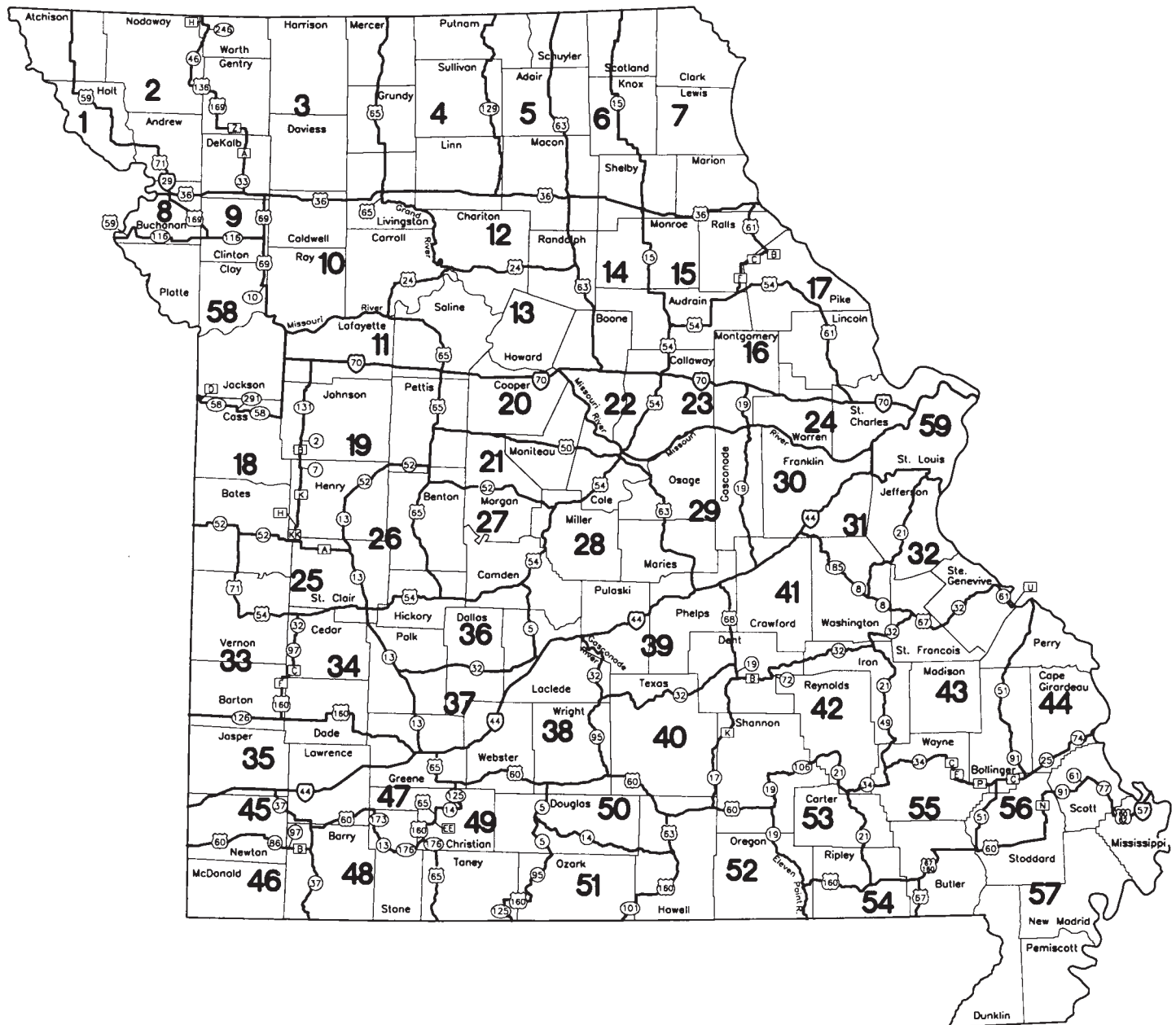
Form ground venison into 4 burgers or separate chops. Tear off four sheets of heavy aluminum foil for grilling. Place burger in center of foil and cover with sections of onion and a pat of butter. Lay slices of carrot and potato atop onion. Sprinkle with salt, pepper and seasoning as you layer vegetables. Drizzle with honey. Seal foil packet and repeat for other three meat patties. Place on grill or hot coals and cook for about 1 hour. Check for doneness. Serves 4.

Canned Venison

- Chunked deer meat
- Salt
- Beef soup bone
- Water
- Quart jars
- Lids and seals

Brown deer chunks in water in a soup pot. Add a beef soup bone to give the broth some fat. Fill quart-jars with meat chunks within one-inch of lid. Add 1 teaspoon salt (1/2 teaspoon for pint-jars.) Fill jar with enough broth to just cover meat. Pressure-cook according to your cooker manufacturer's recommendations or for 90 minutes at 10 pounds.

Missouri Deer Management Units



For detailed regulations on deer hunting, consult the special leaflets issued each year. These are available by July 1 where hunting permits are sold, the Conservation Department's web site or Conservation Department offices.



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